

"The positive value of the sentiment of rank, for those whose position is relatively high, is obvious: the satisfaction afforded by a feeling of superiority. This corresponds to the Thomas-Znaniecki wish for recognition. The negative value, for those whose position is low, is of course humiliation or a sense of inferiority.

As individual rank is so largely settled by birth, a man can not do much to improve his position. Most of those of rather humble status seemed content with their lot. Presumably Spiro will penetrate into this matter farther than I can. But even the foregoing account, focussed as it is on formal, shared patterns of behavior, has repeatedly shown how two individuals were driven by craving for a higher position than their genealogies [202] allowed them. They are the two most prominent individuals on the atoll, in our eyes, except for the chiefs; and there is some doubt about even that exception--namely, Tom and Gargeligar. Though the writer is by no means qualified to diagnose a neurosis, he can not help pointing out how the behavior of these two resembles the standard picture of an inferiority complex."

4: KrKmer--201

116, 157, 144

(1909) 1937

Woleaians

Woleai

In general it must be stressed that the natives of Uleai are charming, a fact which has been observed by previous visitors and which is most true of the women. The photographs are well able to prove this point. An English half-breed (photograph 18c) [VMM: see source], as on Lamotrek, proves British dominance.

9: Senfft--13

116, 157

(1903) 1904

Woleaians

Lamotrek

The population is peace-loving and good-natured but indolent.

9: Senfft--14
116, 157, 463

(1903) 1904

Woleaians
Woleai

The population is peace-loving but is greatly inferior to that of Yap in intelligence, industry and character; they are efficient, though, as canoe constructors, seamen and fishers.

14: Born et al--576

(1907) 1907

Woleaians

116, 157, 731

Ifalik

On April 12 we [MR: district official Fritz] arrived at Ifalik and brought the people the share of the provisions allotted to them [MR: after the typhoon of March, 1907]. But none wanted to leave their destroyed home; much more, the ruling chief turned down my proposal. All depictions of the coming distress were useless; the chief frankly and rightly feared a lessening of power with the emigration of large numbers of his subjects. But I am convinced that when after a few months bitter want strikes, the obstinacy of this gentleman will yield of its own accord.

28: Spiro--17-18
116, 574, 622, 157

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"But the chiefs have responsibilities other than economic. The chiefs are the official hosts of any traveler to the island. If by chance, the visitor has no kinsmen on Ifaluk, or if he be a dignitary, such as a chief or an American, it is the responsibility of the chief to make his stay as pleasant as possible. Thus, if people gave us gifts of food, they did so as a gesture of friendship, but the chiefs took upon themselves the responsibility of caring for our wants and needs, as part of their duties as chiefs. Not a day would pass when we were not brought food or drinking coconuts by at least one of them, and they were assiduous in [18] dropping in on us to inquire about our welfare, and to ask whether we needed or wanted anything. Of course they, as individuals, were interested in our welfare, but there was little doubt that they were acting as chiefs, as representatives of their people, lest our needs not be satisfied and then Ifaluk would be 'more down.' All the chiefs responded in the Stewart Emotional Response Test, that one of the things that would cause them great shame would be a comment by a chief of another atoll to the effect that the Ifaluk chief was a poor host."

28: Spiro--25 [2]
116, 622, 554, 157

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"The most important function served by the chiefs we may conclude, is that of cultural or ethical fathers. It is to the chiefs that the people look for the source of their basic values and for their sanctions and validations. The chiefs, recognize this role, and behave towards their people in a paternal manner. This interpretation comes out very beautifully in the following incidental statement by Tom. I had been collecting folklore from the chiefs, and after finishing the mythology, they told me some stories about some 'fool fellows', Ifalukians, who had responded to certain situations in a very foolish manner. The chiefs told me that I was to keep these stories secret, since the people did not know them, and they preferred that they not be told. I asked them the reason for this secrecy, and they answered that the people would laugh at these foolish acts, and would be ashamed that their own people had committed such stupidities. Tom then added that the chiefs would not laugh or be ashamed, since they are 'all same pappa this place,' and thus would treat them as a parent might treat some ontoward act of his child."

28: Spiro--58
116, 776, 157, 753

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"Another important indication of the people's preoccupation with the alus, is the evidence from native phantasy life. The incidence of perception of alus in the Rorschach and TAT is very high, and the perception of the alus in the blots and pictures, is of course, sheer projection. The frequency of the alus in the children's drawings makes it one of the most favorite categories. Indeed it was the drawing of the alus by the children--the small children--that aroused my curiosity about the alus and their meaning to the people. Finally a large percentage of the dreams I collected were nightmares, in which an alus was about to attack the dreamer, at which point he awoke. The dreaming of the alus indicates as strongly as possible how deeply into the unconscious of the people the belief in, and fear of, the alus has struck.

On a more conscious level is the fear of the alus expressed in the Stewart Emotional Response Test. A significantly high percentage of people responded with alus, when asked to tell what arouses fear in them."

28: Spiro--60-61
116, 157, 761

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians
Ifalik

"On the other hand death wishes do exist, as the TAT reveals. A great number of people perceived the human figures in the pictures as dead. This of course, is not [61] the only possible interpretation of such perception. Dead people may not only be hostile death wishes, but may be personal identifications of the people with inert, lifeless, people, as projections of their own inner psychic life. This will bear much scrutiny before a final conclusion is drawn. Apriori, I suspect, that both are operative here, depending upon the person.

In either event it would be important to know whether the people harbor death wishes against others. My field work, on this point, was sloppy, indeed. I have one notation in my field notes, dated one month after our arrival, in which Tom had informed me that if a man harbors death wishes against another, a benevolent alus will punish him by retaliating in kind. This note was tucked away in the corpus of field notes, and forgotten. I have no idea, therefore, whether this is a personal or a cultural belief, nor what the incidence of such phantasies are, nor, if this is a cultural belief, how many deaths are attributed to this fact."

28: Spiro--88
116, 853, 157, 862

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians-1-2
Ifalik

"It has been claimed by many observers that in cultures in which there is no oral frustration, in which the breast is always available, that children will not suck their thumbs. The great majority of children on Ifaluk are thumb suckers, not only those who have been weaned, but those who are still being suckled. Some mothers discourage thumb-sucking, while others are unconcerned about it. Those opposed to the practice say that it weakens the thumb and kills the child's appetite.

Thumb sucking, then, is not only a function of oral frustration. It may be a simple satisfaction of the sucking reflex. Or, in older children, it may be a regression to the oral level of mastery. This would be particularly true on Ifaluk, in which the older child is, relatively speaking, neglected, so that the thumb sucking is a return to the security and emotional gratification of the nursing infant.

When the mother feeds her baby, she lifts it from its bed or cradle, returning it to its place, when she is finished. Always care is taken to support the infant's head, so that it does not fall back. At first the stiff cloth is used which prevents the head from falling. Later the cloth is discarded, but the mother supports the head with her hand. This support continues whenever the baby is held, until it begins to crawl. Again, I learned this the hard way, by violation of the practice, and being taught the correct way by the father of the infant I had 'maltreated'.

28: Spiro--88
116, 853, 157, 862

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians-2
Ifalik

Only the mother may feed the baby during its first three months. If she should die, a wet nurse will be found, but not if her milk is scarce. In the latter case, coconut juice will be added to the diet. "

28: Spiro--89-90
116, 854, 157, 609

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians-1-2
Ifalik

"As we have already observed, the infant is constantly and continuously watched over by its mother and her attendant for the first two months. If it cries, it is picked up, nursed, rocked in their arms, or rocked in the cradle. After this two month period, there is no restriction on the people who can attend to its needs, so that its father, or siblings, or any stranger may and does pick it up, rock it, or attempt to cajole it if it cries.

Already at this age, the infant is exposed to the faces and arms of many people. For the westerner, the amount of handling the infant receives is almost fantastic. The infant, particularly after it can crawl, is never allowed to remain in the arms of one person. In the course of a half hour conversation, the baby might change hands ten times, being passed from one person to another. This transference of the infant is not due to the fatigue of the person who is holding it at the time, but is done at the request of the others. The adults, as well as the older children, love to fondle the babies and to play with them, with the result that the infant does not stay with one person very long. This means, of course, that the baby gets to know the faces of many people, and learns to appreciate the love and protection that an adult can and does give it, be he a relative or stranger. This intimacy of contact with strangers at an early age, which establishes a freedom of relationship with non-relatives at a later age, increases the uneasiness the

28: Spiro--89-90
116, 854, 157, 609

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians-2
Ifalik

[90] babies might normally have towards strangers. Every person in the district, at least, is part of the infant's in-group, and is known to him from earliest infancy. The stranger, therefore, is really a stranger, whose behavior is entirely unpredictable, since he is entirely unknown. With few exceptions, therefore, the young children were very shy and in many cases downright afraid of me for a long time, until they got to know me. (and the candy I gave to every child I met was not a minor factor in establishing initial rapport with the children.)"

28: Spiro--146

(1947-48) 1949

Woleaians

157

Ifalik

"7. There is little rationality in their almost compulsive knife sharpening. The knives are already sharp. It is likely that this preoccupation has unconscious, symbolic significance. I have no evidence but suspect that it is related to certain sexual anxieties, perhaps a castration anxiety."